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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/05/2018  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [UNSC](#) [PM](#)  
SUBJECT: PANAMA: ETHIOPIA-ERITREA DEMARCHE DELIVERED

REF: STATE 21218

Classified By: POLCOUNS Brian R. Naranjo. Reason: 1.4 (b).

"Panama would be open to considering focused measures to pressure the Government of Eritrea to cease interfering in the UN Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea," Panamanian MFA DG for External Affairs Javier Bonagas told POLCOUNS on March 5.

Bonagas -- who was very conversant on the situation in Eritrea, Ethiopia, and the region -- expressed concern at continued "arms trafficking" in both Eritrea and Ethiopia, said that this region of Africa could not suffer additional instability, and expressed concerns about the regrettable human rights situation. Bonagas said Eritrea could not be permitted to continue to "disturb" the situation in the region. Bonagas said that Panama would support focused sanctions against Eritrean officials (e.g., travel ban, asset freeze) and an arms embargo to attempt to pressure Eritrea to stop interfering with UN operations. Comment: Panama generally does not like to resort to sanctions and rarely ever suggests using "pressure" against other countries. Bonagas' openness to sanctions and pressure with respect Eritrea highlights Panama's belief that Eritrea is indeed in the wrong, Eritrea's behavior is unacceptable, and the UNSC should act to bolster UNMEE.  
EATON